

FAMOUS WOMEN IN MODERN HISTORY

(By MARY HILLIARD HINTON.)

II.—The Empress-Queen Maria Theresa, the Real Founder of the Austrian Empire.

There is no more admirable character in history, nor a more stirring reign than that of Maria Theresa Valperga Amelia Christina, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, Archduchess of Austria, sovereign of the Netherlands, Duchess of Milan, of Parma, and Placentia and Grand Duchess of Tuscany. No one can read the story of her remarkable career without being thrilled and astounded at the invincible will, the never-failing fortitude, the keen sense of the responsibility of a kindly heritage and the ultimate triumph of this noble woman, which is one of those exceptional cases where truth proves to be stranger than fiction, and furnishes the most notable illustration that a woman, alone, unaided by a strong ministry, but hampered by an inferior one, surrounded by apparently insurmountable odds can save an empire and bring about a state of prosperity hitherto unknown there. What marvelous exhibition of constructive statesmanship!

Maria Theresa was born May 13, 1717, the eldest of the two children (both daughters) of the Emperor Charles VI. of Germany, who determined that she should succeed him on the throne upon which woman had never ruled. In order to insure the realization of this exception he influenced the powers of Europe to bind themselves through the Pragmatic Sanction to support her claim.

The archduchess was the joy of her family, having been endowed with numerous attractions and splendid qualities. She inherited the inflexible pride and unwavering obstinacy of her race, and was early imbued with a lofty conception of the power and grandeur of the House of Hapsburg and the part she was to share in the maintenance and furtherance thereof. Her's was a magnanimous soul, overflowing with generous impulses and kindly deeds; not by nature ambitious, circumstances in time rendered her so; she is described as possessing an "understanding, naturally good," though it was not claimed that her mental gifts were by any means exceptional; she was carefully brought up, with her sister Marianna, under the supervision of her devoted mother; she made rapid progress in music, an accomplishment that proved a source of much pleasure through life, dancing and Italian. Her spirits were vivacious and while her anger could be aroused this was infrequent. In beauty Maria Theresa has been surpassed by few. Her figure was tall, elegantly formed; her bearing always majestic and full of grace; her eyes were gray, sparkling and expressive, her complexion transparent; she had a beautiful mouth and a winning smile. In spite of the fact she had inherited the full, protruding lower Jagellon lip that had been handed down by a Polish princess of the House of Jagellon that had in the far-away past married into the House of Hapsburg, a feature that has marred the face of many a descendant, conspicuous among them the President King of Spain. Her hair was golden and abundant. To these charms was added the sweetest of voices and that "fascinating manner" for which she has been so universally admired. Of course, one so richly endowed by nature could not have been ignorant of her attractions, but it can be said to her everlasting honor that never did she use them to win the hearts of men but to gain the loyalty of rebellious subjects. Her deeply religious nature and early attachment and abiding affection for her handsome and attractive cousin, Francis, Duke of Lorraine, whom she married when eighteen, and that pride of her royal rank, all combined to prevent her ever playing the role of coquet. While she possessed not the brilliant genius of Catherine of Russia, nor the political sagacity and wisdom of Elizabeth of England, her lovable, feminine virtues and indomitable will did more to re-establish her tottering throne than their more masculine characteristics were capable of achieving.

Charles VI. was wholly lacking in force of character, governing his dominions in such a way that he produced the direst distress among his people. By dishonorable negotiations, in order to prevent a rupture with France, he ceded the Duchy of Lorraine to the French—that fair province that has since been the cause of ceaseless trouble. In order to appease, to the Duke of Lorraine, he presented the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. Each province, wholly ignorant of the secret transaction, rebelled, but was finally compelled to acquiesce. Again, to purchase peace in a war with Turkey, he yielded up Belgrade, that territory Austria has so longed to recover. At one time he was in such straits that he even planned to sacrifice his daughter, Marie Theresa, who

was to marry Francis of Lorraine, to whom she was devoted, by giving her hand in marriage to Don Carlos, heir to the throne of Spain. However, this spirited daughter was the last to be made miserable for reasons of State, and succeeded in attaining her fondest wishes in marrying her own choice. While she admired her father's virtues, she condemned his mismanagement. So when the Emperor died suddenly after partaking too immoderately of a favorite dish—mushrooms stewed in oil—Maria Theresa found her inheritance in a wretched state, the dominions that had come down to him, prosperous and powerful thirty years before.

The empress-queen was twenty-four, in the full enjoyment of her manifold fold blessings, happily married to Francis, Duke of Lorraine, the mother of two lovely little girls, wholly inexperienced, without any wise leaders from whom she could seek advice. Her husband was always sympathetic and a faithful friend, but he was mentally her inferior, his education had been so sadly neglected that he could scarcely read or write, and while he was brave he was ignorant of the art of war and was no general. The powers of Europe, as soon as Charles VI. was dead, regarding the Pragmatic Sanction as a mere "scrap of paper," refused to acknowledge the rights of Maria Theresa, and secretly set to work to partition her territories among themselves. Her position was such as to overawe the stoutest heart; the treasury was empty; the army consisted of barely thirty thousand, poorly equipped, undisciplined, unpaid troops, and she had no ministry, or worse still, an incompetent lot of imbeciles composed the council. Then Hungary and Bohemia were in revolt, their leading nobles desirous of uniting their kingdoms with Turkey. Is there any wonder that the lovely young woman should have preferred domestic happiness to a life of strife on the throne and wrote thus?

"With joy, had I been insignificant and had remained simply Grand Duchess of Tuscany, if I could have believed that God so will it; but as he has chosen me to bear the great burden of government I hold it on principle and consider it my duty to apply all my resources to the task."

Frederick the Great calmly ignored the treaty by which he had bound himself to Austria and seized upon Silesia with his well disciplined army. This marked the beginning of the war of the Austrian Succession, by which Europe was unsettled for eight years. Austria, France, Prussia, Russia, Bohemia, the Netherlands, Turkey and England were involved. Some times two or three of these were fighting as allies, and in a few days they would be fighting each other. England, ever on the side of the weak, stood nobly by Maria Theresa. "The Queen of Hungary" was a favorite toast in Britain, her likeness was to be seen everywhere. Parliament voted large sums for her cause and the ladies of the realm, headed by the aged Duchess of Marlborough, presented her with half a million dollars, a gift her pride forced her to decline. Holland also remained her firm ally.

In the most of this struggle, to save her empire from dissolution, when her friends despaired of hope, Maria Theresa repaired to Presburg to be crowned Queen of Hungary, June 13, 1741. The iron crown of St. Stephen, padded to fit her shapely head, was placed upon her brow, his tattered sacred gown was thrown over her jeweled robes and his sword girded to her waist. In this attire she rode up the Royal Mount and upon its crest, drawing her sabre, defied the four corners of the earth. Later when she sat down to the dinner in the banquet hall of the ancient castle, as she removed the weighty crown her wealth of fair hair fell in ashower of ringlets over her face, flushed with excitement, neck and shoulders, she addressed the Hungarian nobles, who rose in a body and amid the gleam of sabres, shouted, "We will consecrate our lives and arms; we will die for our King, Maria Theresa!" She was the first Queen of Hungary. From that hour the mixed tribes of Hungary supported her loyally.

The bloody conflict terminated with the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, October 23, 1748. Maria Theresa was firmly established on her throne with some loss of territory and with fame as a great general. For the loss of Silesia she never was reconciled.

With peace restored this remarkable sovereign turned her thoughts to the betterment of the civic government of a kingdom in which she wrought vast improvements. The method of taxation was altered; many corrections in the administration of justice were made; the employment of torture was forever abolished. She labored for the advance of arts and sciences, established schools for all ranks and

reformed public schools; offered prizes for progress of pupils, or propriety of conduct; awarded prizes to those excelling in manufactures, mining, smelting metals, as well as for spinning. She realized the importance of agriculture and founded an agricultural society at Milan, with bounties bestowed on peasantry raising the finest crops. The adoption of vaccination and the building of a smallpox hospital were among her beneficent regulations. She brought about reforms in the Roman Catholic Church. The Prater was first thrown open to the public in this reign. In spite of loss of territory and a draining war, six millions filled the empty treasury in 1750. In conjunction with Marshal Daun she established a better system for the army, which she raised to one hundred and eight thousand men, and founded a military institute at Vienna. She visited camps and garrisons, and by her gracious speeches inspired her soldiery. To her military ability Frederick the Great paid this compliment: "The Austrian army acquired, under the auspices of Maria Theresa, such a degree of perfection as it had never attained under any of her predecessors, and that a woman accomplished designs worthy of a man."

Her efforts to civilize the Hungarian and Bohemian gipsies proved futile. All the new laws, changes, regulations, every improvement emanated from Maria Theresa's own brain. She perhaps devoted herself too assiduously to business, did too much, instead of entrusting more to others, which was doubtless due to the fact that she was surrounded by such a lot of inefficient persons in the beginning. In health she rose at five o'clock daily and devoted ten or twelve hours to business, attended amusements of her court, which was recognized as the purest in Europe, entered society and was a devoted wife and the mother of sixteen children, whom she did not neglect.

The loss of Silesia preyed upon the mind of the great sovereign and to humble Prussia and regain this province was the craving of her life. One of the saddest mistakes of her reign was the sacrifice of her youngest daughter, Marie Antionette, in order to win France as an ally. It has ever seemed strange that this queen of blameless life was willing to send her beautiful child, only fifteen, into that vile court to further her schemes for an aggressive war. The result was winning over France, Austria's enemy of long standing, and a struggle of seven years. France, Russia, Sweden, Denmark and Spain joined with Austria against Frederick the Great, who only had the financial support of England and Hanover. When peace was finally signed at Hubertsberg in 1763, there was no change in territory; Maria Theresa had both regained and lost Silesia in the conflict; Bohemia and Saxony had been devastated, Prussia almost depopulated, cities had been wiped out, thousands upon thousands of dollars spent and half a million men sacrificed.

The partition of Poland is one blot on the reign of this fair empress-queen. To Poland Austria owed her very existence. In the chamber where Maria Theresa transacted all business two pictures only hung upon the walls, one a portrait of John Sobieski, whose valor saved Vienna from the Turkish invasion of 1683. The other was that of Leopold, her grandfather, who owed the preservation of his country, crown, capital and life to the Poles on that occasion. Assisting Russia and Prussia in the theft was an instance of the basest ingratitude.

Francis I. died suddenly, returning from the theatre, the evening of August 18, 1765. Maria Theresa's grief was excessive; she wore deepest mourning the remaining sixteen years of her life and even had the simple rooms to which she moved from the state apartments (which were never occupied after his death), hung in black, and much of her time was spent in religious devotion, the whole month of each succeeding August being passed in fasting, prayer and celebrating masses for his soul's repose. The anniversary of his death was especially consecrated to his memory. After 1765 she reigned jointly with her son, Joseph II.

So long had death been contemplated that when the final summons to a more imperial presence than her own came to this proud and truly good ruler she met it with the utmost calmness. She died November 20, 1780, in the sixty-fourth year of her age; her remains repose beside those of her husband in the church of the Capuchins, Vienna, in the tomb she had constructed in the bloom of her youth. Today the Austrian empire honors and idolizes the memory of her real founder, only empress and greatest sovereign. One of the adornments of Vienna is the superb bronze statue of Maria Theresa by the museums and is to the Austrian capital what that of Frederick the Great is to Berlin. It is the sculptured story of this glorious reign.

The life of Maria Theresa furnishes one of the most conspicuous examples in history of what deep piety minus genius, safeguarded by perseverance and good sense, can achieve, preserve and perpetuate.

It Depends.

Yale Record.

He—W-w-will you k-k-kiss m-m-me?

She (shyly)—How long will the real thing take?

LOOKING IN ON THOMAS DIXON

(O. Bargamin Crocker in Skyland Magazine.)

At his home on Riverside Drive, in the library at the top of the house, which by the way, is shut off with a trap door over the stairs, sits Thomas Dixon, working, while the outside world with its glorious sunshine and budding flowers of spring call to him in vain.

He is up to his ears in manuscript. With a master hand he is weaving romances that thrill in their daring and quicken the pulse of the reader by tender, tense love scenes.

He is doing three novels. "My! You are certainly busy! Of course you are doing them one at a time?"

"Rest assured I am!" was his prompt rejoinder. "But I have them all outlined."

"And you have no secretary? I thought all big writers had secretaries."

He threw back his head and laughed in that whole-souled way of his.

"I never indulge in such luxuries!" he declared. "In fact I'm a bear when at work. I can't endure any human being near me. If I had a secretary I should commit murder sooner or later."

"I was quite surprised to see your latest novel running serially in the Green Book. I never heard of you writing for a magazine before. In fact, if you remember, you told me about a year ago that you had no time for magazine stories. You were busy getting out novels."

"That's true. The Foolish Virgin is a novel. Not a short story. But I broke into the magazine game to avoid sacrificing a book during the depressing time of this war."

"I like the story very much. How long will it run? It seems to be quite different from any you've ever written before. New York sort of gets into the blood; doesn't it?"

"Yes, of course. It's the only really great city we have where the individual can live life in freedom. My new novels are all remote from the South. The Foolish Virgin will run until next September."

"Well, I must admit," I said in conclusion, "I'm somewhat surprised about the 'secretary'; I was so sure all writers had them. I'd thought to some day become one myself, to some famous writer, hoping that with the inspiration of such surroundings to at least realize my own ambitions to become a novelist."

"Believe me," Dixon emphatically confided, "the road to a writer's corner does not lie through the library of any established author. Avoid them as a pestilence. The Kingdom is within you?"

The Foolish Virgin, meritoriously illustrated by Walter Title, and now running serially in the Green Book, is a novel of love at first sight which answers the question: "Does a Girl Ever Know When the Right Man Comes Along?"

DOG IN FIRE HERO ROLE.

Saves Life of Mistress by Tugging at Her Bed Clothes.

Canton (Mass.) Dispatch to N. Y. Herald.

Mrs. Dwight M. Foster's Newfoundland dog saved her from death in a fire which destroyed her home, in York street, this morning.

Mr. Foster was away on a business trip and Mrs. Foster was alone in the house with two dogs. Soon after midnight the Newfoundland dog came to her bedside, and, seizing the clothing in his mouth, started to drag her from the bed.

When Mrs. Foster awoke she hurried downstairs and found the entire lower part of the house in flames.

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FATE AND CUPID.

By Grif Alexander.

Said Fate to Cupid t'other day,

"Get busy, boy! It now is May!"

The scene is set and pretty soon

We'll see the blushing brides of June

Sing, jocund boy! Bring all your joy!

Fling Care away—and then

King, versed in craft, wing every shaft

With stings for maids and men—

Why, Cupid, if 'twere not for you

I wouldn't have a thing to do!"

And Cupid grinned. The merry quip

Was true to their co-partnership.

And, grinning he remarked, "I am

Now moved to make an epigram:—

Ye lads and lassies stupid,

Believe me when I state,

Who, parrot-like plays Cupid

Is monkeying with Fate!"

And then the villains laughed again!

What chance with them have maids

and men?

The Ontario Department of Educa-

tion recently announced that future

examinations in English, Canadian,

and European history will contain one

or more specific question dealing

with the present European war. It

is announced that "an adequate

knowledge of the topics in question

shall be required as one of the tests

of promotion from grade to grade."

The Minister of Education for Ontario

urges that "generously disposed cit-

izens and school boards offer prizes for

essays on one or more phases of the

present struggle."